

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO COMMAC SCOTT AFB ILL

S E C R E T STATE 211026

EXDIS

SCOTT AFB FOR POLAD: FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ANKARA ATHENS
LONDON MADRID FROM ROME OCT 16 REPEATED TO YOU. QUOTE:

S E C R E T ROME 11210

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, IT, XF

SUBJECT: RESUPPLY TO ISRAEL

REF: A) STATE 204562; B) ROME 11067; C) USDAO ROME DTG 151450Z
OCT (NOTAL); D) ROME 11194

1. EMBASSY SEES LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT ITALIAN GOVT WILL APPROVE
US LOGISTICAL SUPPORT OF ISRAEL FROM ITALIAN SOIL. AS REFS B-D
INDICATED, ITALIAN GOVT IS EXTRAORDINARILY SENSITIVE NOT ONLY TO
CERTAIN PUBLIC OUTCRY FROM COMMUNISTS IN PARTICULAR THAT WOULD
ENSUE FROM SUCH OPERATIONS IF THEY BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, BUT
ALSO BECAUSE OF HER VIRTUALLY COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON OIL SUPPLIES
FROM THE MIDEAST. IN A FEW WORDS, GOI DOES NOT RPT NOT WANT TO
RISK GETTING ON WRONG SIDE OF ARABS. IF, AS NOTED IN REF C,
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ITALIAN AIR MINISTRY OBJECTED TO US REPLENISHMENT AIRCRAFT FOR
ISRAEL OVERFLYING ITALIAN TERRITORY, WE CANNOT REALISTICALLY EX-
PECT ITALIAN GOVT TO ADOPT A MORE POSITIVE STANCE TOWARDS WHAT
WOULD BE EVEN MORE DIRECT ITALIAN INVOLVEMENT.

2. IF WE ARE TO OBTAIN GREATER ACCOMMODATION IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT ITALIAN COOPERATION WILL INCREASE IF ITALIANS BECOME PERSUADED THAT THEIR ROLE WITH US WOULD FURTHER AN IMMINENT, FAIR, AND LASTING RESOLUTION OF MIDEAST CRISIS. TO THE EXTENT WE CAN BE CANDID REGARDING THE SECRETARY'S DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AND THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE CAN POINT TO REAL OR LIKELY PROGRESS TOWARD PEACEFUL SOLUTION, WE MAY OBTAIN GREATER ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN OUR EFFORT.

3. EMERGENCY LANDINGS ARE, OF COURSE, A DIFFERENT MATTER. WE WOULD ANTICIPATE NO DIFFICULTY IN SECURING ITALIAN APPROVAL TO SUCH LANDINGS WHEN LIFE IS AT STAKE. WE DO NOT SEE ANY NEED FOR ADVANCE APPROVAL OF THE GOI FOR THESE CONTINGENCIES AS THEY WOULD PRESUMABLY BE HANDLED ON AN AD HOC MILITARY-TO-MILITARY BASIS.

4. NOTWITHSTANDING THE ABOVE PESSIMISTIC PROGNOSIS RE LIKELY ITALIAN REACTION TO RESUPPLY OPERATIONS, WE ARE PREPARED TO MAKE THE APPROACH PURSUANT TO THE US-ITALIAN AGREEMENT GOVERNING USE OF FACILITIES IN ITALY, IF WASHINGTON SO DECIDES.

4. PUBLIC AND PRESS REACTION TO USE OF US FACILITIES IN ITALY FOR SUPPORT OF RESUPPLY OPERATION TO ISRAEL CAN BE EXPECTED GENERALLY TO FOLLOW PARTY LINES. COMMUNIST PRESS WILL BE CRITICAL. ISRAEL, HOWEVER, HAS ITS PARTISANS IN THE PRESS (PARTICULARLY THOSE SUPPORTING US POLICIES) AND THE ITALIAN POLITICAL STRUCTURE; THESE ARE ARTICULATE, AND INCLUDE SOME SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. ITALIAN PUBLIC STILL MAY BE CONSIDERED GENERALLY PRO-ISRAEL, ALTHOUGH TO MUCH LESS EXTENT THAN DURING 1967 WAR. INDEPENDENT PRESS AND MAN-ON-THE-STREET APPEAR TO HAVE AS THEIR PRIMARY INTEREST A CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES, ASSURANCE OF OIL SUPPLY, AND POSSIBLE REOPENING OF SUEZ CANAL WHICH OF CONTINUING PRIME INTEREST TO ITALIANS. THEREFORE THIS SEGMENT OF PRESS AND GENERAL PUBLIC LIKELY TO ASSESS ANY ITALIAN INVOLVEMENT IN US RESUPPLY OPERATION IN LIGHT OF HOW IT WOULD AFFECT THESE PRIMARY INTERESTS. IF US RESUPPLY CONSIDERED POSITIVE ELEMENT, IT WOULD RECEIVE GENERAL SUPPORT. RATIONALE WE PRESENT TO MEDIA AND PUBLIC MUST BE PER-
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SUASIVE THAT US SUPPLY OPERATION WILL CONTRIBUTE TO LASTING PEACE IN MIDEAST, AND THUS FURTHER ITALIAN AIMS. WE WOULD STRESS HERE THAT WHICH IS NOW BEING PUBLICLY PRESENTED BY US SPOKESMEN WITH REGARD US DESIRE PREVENT MASSIVE SOVIET AIRLIFT FROM UNSETTLING MILITARY BALANCE IN AREA. THE BALANCE WE SEEK WOULD EXCLUDE A MILITARY SOLUTION BY EITHER SIDE AND THUS CONTRIBUTE THE BASIC CONFIDENCE NECESSARY TO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A LASTING SOLUTION. VOLPE. UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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